In Memoriam.

Mrs. Maria B. Furber.

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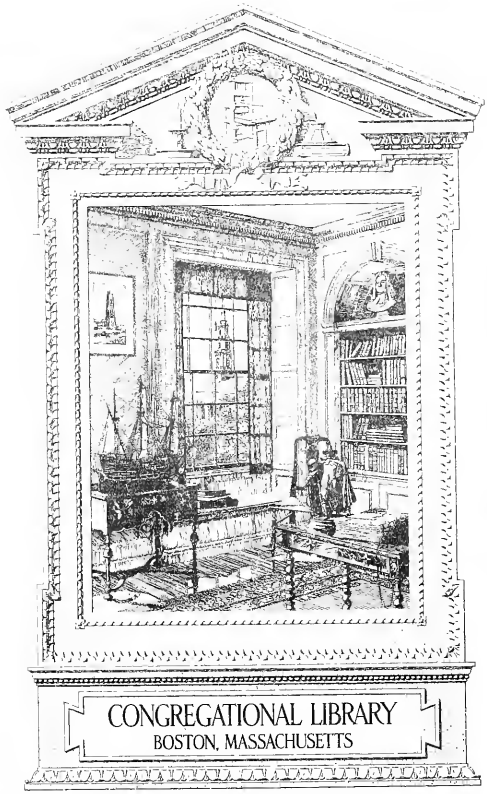

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A SERMON

IN MEMORY OF

MRS. MARIA BRIGHAM FURBER,

PREACHED IN THE

FIRST CHURCH AT NEWTON CENTRE, MASS.,

JANUARY 21, 1883.

BY

J. W. WELLMAN, D.D.,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST CHURCH, MALDEN, MASS.

WITH AN APPENDIX.

BOSTON:
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1883.

Newton Centre, Feb. 6, 1883.

Rev. J. W. Wellman, D.D.,

Dear Sir, — By vote of the First Church and Society in Newton, their earnest thanks are hereby tendered to you for your very able and appropriate sermon in memory of Mrs. Maria B. Furber, the wife of our pastor; and we beg leave to request a copy of the sermon for publication.

Respectfully,

WILLIAM T. WARDWELL,
MARSHALL O. RICE,
ROBERT R. BISHOP,
Committee.

To Messrs. William T. Wardwell, Marshall O. Rice, and Robert R. Bishop, *Committee of the First Church and Society in Newton Centre.*

Dear Brethren, — Your letter of the 6th inst. has been received. I thank you for the kind terms in which you speak of the sermon preached in your house of worship on the 21st ultimo, in memory of Mrs. Maria B. Furber, the wife of your beloved pastor.

You also ask for a copy of the discourse for publication. I cheerfully accede to your request, believing that even an inadequate presentation to the public of such faith and works as those of Mrs. Furber will be in harmony with her own Christly purpose to be always doing good.

I forward to you with this note the manuscript of the sermon.

Yours fraternally, and in the service of our common Lord,

J. W. WELLMAN.

Malden, Feb. 17, 1883.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

THE funeral services for Mrs. FURBER occurred Sept. 21, 1882. After prayer at the house, by Rev. Calvin Cutler, a large congregation assembled at the church, in a pouring rain. The introductory services were by Rev. G. G. Phipps, the address by Rev. J. W. Wellman, D.D., the prayer by Rev. H. J. Patrick, and afterward a service at the cemetery by Rev. Wolcott Calkins.

At a subsequent day a commemorative discourse was preached by Dr. Wellman, which, with other papers, is now printed for distribution among friends.

SERMON.[1]

"And the children of Israel came up to her for judgment." — *Judg.* iv. 5.

The story of Deborah is given us in prose and poetry. Both the historical narrative and the song of triumph are brief, and yet they present in clear outline a character exceptionally complete and grand. Not so much through any purpose of her own as by her commanding abilities, Deborah attained the highest civil position known in her country at that period. She was the only woman in that long succession of the fifteen judges of Israel. At the same time she filled the still more sacred office of prophetess. So wise was she in counsel, that, as she sat under her palm-tree in Mount Ephraim, all the people came to her for the adjudication of their differences; and so deep and sincere was her piety, that God elected her the

[1] Some portions of this discourse as printed were omitted, for lack of time, when it was preached. A few other changes have also been made.

poet-seer of her time. She could raise an army and appoint its commander, designate to her general a camping-ground, and plan for him a military campaign; and yet so tender was her sympathy for all oppressed people, and so thoughtfully did she care for the needy, that she could claim the appellation, assumed by only one other on the pages of Scripture, of "a mother in Israel." She was brave enough to go upon the battle-field, were it needful; yet naturally, whenever occasion required it, she exhibited the most attractive womanliness. She so loved liberty and hated oppression, was endowed with such a tireless energy, with such strong mental powers and patriotic sagacity, that she attained an enviable rank in the domain of statesmanship; and yet there seems to have been no lack of the gentler graces. Coleridge was not untrue to the sacred narrative when he spake of her as a mother "with a mother's heart, and with the vehemency of a mother's and a patriot's love." On the other hand, Dean Stanley, with equal propriety, describes her as "the magnificent impersonation of the free spirit of the Jewish people and the Jewish life." And Tennyson discloses a just sense of the rare completeness and grandeur of her character, when

(possibly mistaking the name of her husband for that of the place where she dwelt) he spake of her as "that great dame of Lapidoth."

Deborah lived in an age quite different from our own, and was educated among a people far removed from us in their habits of life, in the style of their civilization, and in their religious practices and institutions. Still, in certain prominent traits, she was strikingly typical of her whose character and life we commemorate to-day.

The early years of Mrs. Maria B. Furber were quiet and uneventful. She was not in the habit of speaking of herself, and left no written account of her childhood and youth. She was born in Southborough, and was the eldest child of Mr. Lincoln and Mrs. Lucy (Forbes) Brigham. The intelligence and sterling integrity of her parents are seen in the fact that they regarded the mental and moral training of their children as of more worth to them than any legacy of wealth. Their home seems to have been a fair sample of those frugal yet thrifty New-England homes which are themselves among the richest fruits of the Puritan faith, and from which have gone forth some of the finest minds

and noblest characters known thus far in our national history. These parents had limited means, but large hearts; and they planned wisely for their children. There was no reasonable sacrifice they were not willing to make to give them a good education and a fair start in the world. Much that made Mrs. Furber the woman she was came to her through the laws of heredity. I have been told that "she was indebted to her father for her fine physique, and to both her parents for her splendid physical constitution and perfect health, as well as for her hopeful and joyous disposition; while her native strength and independence of character, her rare mental endowments, her benevolence and untiring energy, were largely inherited from her mother." In her home education consideration was given to things great and small. Her culture from the outset was unusually comprehensive. Her mother, for instance, instructed her in respect to those grand and eternal principles of right and justice, which, entering afresh at that period into the convictions of men, originated a mighty popular movement against the system of American slavery, and finally brought about the entire abolition of that hideous institution; and at the same time her father

taught her that so small a matter as the art of walking elegantly was not beneath her attention.

While she was yet a little child, her parents moved their residence from Southborough to Cambridgeport, and in that town was spent most of her childhood and youth. After passing through the courses of study prescribed in the common schools, she continued her education under the instruction of Mrs. Rawson, an Englishwoman who taught a select boarding-school in Boston. This school was one of some celebrity at the time, and was patronized by many of the prominent families of Boston, Salem, and Gloucester. Afterwards she became a pupil in an academy at Framingham.

The great event of her self-surrender to Christ occurred under the preaching of Dr. Lyman Beecher soon after he came to Boston; and she made a public confession of her faith, May, 1827, by uniting with the church in Hanover Street, of which Dr. Beecher was then pastor. In the same year she entered the senior class in the seminary for young ladies, presided over by Rev. Joseph Emerson, in Wethersfield, Conn.; and graduating in 1828, the first scholar in her class, she completed her school education.

Probably to no other teacher was Mrs. Furber so much indebted as to Mr. Emerson. It was a kind Providence that brought her, in that most thoughtful period in her school-life, under the moulding influence of such a remarkable educator. Nor was she the only one, who, under his tuition, became enraptured with a zeal for high endeavor and achievement, which seems to have been kindled in the heavens, and which never burned out. Among his pupils were Miss Mary Lyon and Miss Z. P. Grant.[1] The memorable character and life-work of these women, of Mrs. Furber, and of others who might be mentioned, cannot be properly understood without some apprehension of the kind of instruction and inspiration they received while pupils of Mr. Emerson. Who was he? We read in the Scriptures of "a poor wise man" who "by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man." There is reason to fear that the name of this later humble but wise benefactor, although his works do still follow him in all parts of our land and in foreign countries, is even now hardly remembered in the world.

[1] Miss Grant, after spending a number of years in teaching, was married to the Hon. William B. Banister.

Born in Hollis, N.H., in 1777, educated in the academy at New Ipswich (in the same State), at Harvard College, and in the study of Dr. Nathanael Emmons at Franklin, he was for thirteen years the successful pastor of the Third Congregational Church in Beverly. But after graduating from college, and before entering the Christian ministry, he was the principal, for a time, of an academy in Framingham, and, later, tutor in his *Alma Mater*. And during his entire pastoral life he was profoundly interested in every thing pertaining to the education of the young. With much painstaking he studied our system of public schools, and the working of our academic and collegiate institutions, and, as the result, became convinced that there were certain deficiencies in them, and especially that there was a great lack of proper schools for young ladies. Compelled by ill health to resign his pastorate, he soon began his real life-work. He opened a seminary for young ladies at Byfield, which was afterwards removed to Saugus, and finally to Wethersfield, Conn. His plans were large. He aimed at nothing less than a new department and a new kind of education in the country. His purpose in the establishment of his seminary was

to fit young women to be themselves, not only teachers, but also founders of seminaries similar to his own in all parts of the land. And among the speedy results were, first, the opening, by the Misses Grant and Lyon, of Adams Female Academy in Derry, N.H., the first school of the kind in that State; and then the founding, by Miss Grant, of a similar institution at Ipswich; and, a little later, the establishment, by Miss Lyon, of the still more distinguished seminary at South Hadley. These noble Christian women gratefully and publicly acknowledged their large indebtedness to Mr. Emerson.

And the equally unique life-work of Mrs. Furber cannot be truly explained without taking into account the controlling ideas and aspirations awakened within her under the magic instruction of that same remarkable educator. Mr. Emerson believed in the training of the whole being, — body, soul, and spirit. He regarded the usual education of young ladies in New England as too limited in its breadth, as well as too superficial. In his judgment they should pursue, not simply a few ornamental arts, but rather those more solid studies which are fitted to give one strength of mind, and

depth of character. He did not disparage the attainment by a young lady of those lighter accomplishments which would make her more graceful and attractive in society, *if only*, at the same time, she would acquire that larger discipline, those broader and more serious views, that deeper and more practical wisdom, and that exhaustless energy in doing good, which would make her life, to the utmost possible degree, a beneficent power in the world. The value he attached to breadth and symmetry of culture is indicated by the fact that he dreaded the effect of devotion to specialties and hobbies, believing that such a course would give a development one-sided, and with great deficiencies. He abhorred deficiencies in character as nature abhors a vacuum.

At the same time Mr. Emerson as a teacher was intensely Christian. He insisted that education should not be considered as an *end*, but only a *means;* that the end should be *usefulness* in the service of Christ, in saving and blessing men, and in glorifying God. Consequently he deprecated the pursuit of studies which are not practical. He believed in the discipline of the mental powers, but would gain that discipline by exercising them, not

so much upon the dead languages and the higher mathematics as upon those studies the mastery of which would be more directly helpful to one in the momentous work of a true Christian life. Still he would favor any study, if once convinced that it would contribute to breadth of knowledge, to the development of all one's powers, and would enable one, when it should be needful, to concentrate them all upon a single object. He believed in what he called "that grand secret of the military tactics of Bonaparte, by which he overthrew kingdoms; namely, the art of bringing the utmost physical force to bear at once upon a single point." Complete self-command he regarded as one of the most serviceable as well as noblest attainments, because without it no one can be sure of being able, whenever occasion shall require it, to bring at once all the forces and acquisitions he possesses to the task of accomplishing a single purpose. And he affirmed that "men who can thus concentrate their powers, like the warriors of the Corsican school, are the men who conquer."

Moreover, Mr. Emerson gave large room in his course of study to the Bible. Nothing was more prominent in his seminary. His school was not

simply an academic, but emphatically a biblical institution. It is the remark of his biographer, that "to study and teach the Bible seems to have been the commanding object of his life." He taught his pupils the *reasonableness* of their entertaining the most implicit confidence in the truth and divine authority of this book, and trained them to order their lives daily by its precepts, and to develop their characters in accordance with its teachings. In his view it was the best of all text-books which could be brought into his seminary. Late in his life he wrote, "My present theory is, that the Bible is the book of books for schools, for academies, colleges, — the book of books, not only to direct the conduct, convert the soul, and save the world, but to discipline the faculties, and that its sacred and richly diversified pages are sufficient for this purpose without the aid of Homer, Virgil, or Newton.

He also taught his young ladies to avoid an aimless life; never to drift; to work by system, and for some definite purpose; to have plans for the day, for the year, and for life. He regarded nothing in the line of their education as trivial which would augment their power to do good in the world.

Consequently he trained them to set a high value upon such things as the graces of courtesy and affability, the culture of the voice, the arts of conversing well and listening well, and the habit of quick and accurate observation. At the same time he was himself a wonderful inspiration to his scholars. He called forth the best that was in them, not only by his enthusiasm as a teacher, but also by the genuineness of his character and the grandeur of his aims. He incited them to think meanly of themselves, unless they were planning and attempting large things. Writing to Miss Grant, and advising her to take charge of Adams Female Academy, in Derry, N.H., he said, "If you can put into operation a permanent school on right principles, you can well afford to give up your life whenever you have done it." And President Hitchcock, in his "Memoir of Mary Lyon," expresses the judgment, that in such remarks as this, dropped by Mr. Emerson, may be found "the germ of the seminary" founded at South Hadley.[1]

[1] This brief account of Mr. Emerson and his school has been drawn largely from a memoir written by his brother, Rev. Ralph Emerson, D.D., who for many years was professor of ecclesiastical history in the Theological Seminary at Andover. The Emerson family is distinguished for

Such was the man under whose magnetic instruction Mrs. Furber came at that period in her life when her whole nature was most plastic and impressible. And with all her native gifts, and the excellent training she received in her childhood home and in her earlier school-life, there can be little doubt, that for the rare symmetry and completeness of her character, the easy command she

the many able scholars, authors, and ministers whom it has given to the world. Rev. Joseph Emerson was not simply a remarkable educator, he was also the author of several books, some of which had a large sale. He published Lectures on the Millennium, Outline of a Course of Astronomical Lectures, A Union Catechism, The Poetic Reader, Questions and Supplement to Watts on the Improvement of the Mind, Questions on Goodrich's History of the United States, A Letter to a Class of Young Ladies. The occasion of this "Letter" is believed to have been a communication addressed to Mr. Emerson, in behalf of her class, by Miss Maria Brigham.

The following brief extracts from letters will be suggestive to the friends of Mrs. Furber of the kind of educating influence under which she was brought in that famous seminary at Wethersfield: —

"Any lady who has occasion to excel in guiding her numerous household, in being the active head of all her various departments of domestic labor, in presiding in the parlor and at the table without display or diffidence, in rendering her house the delightful abode of hospitality as well as of domestic happiness, in becoming a skilful teacher for her own children, or for others who may be gathered into the sabbath-school or Bible class, and in being the mainspring of many a benevolent association, and, besides all, who will find it desirable to be intelligent on most subjects of practical interest, and it may be, too, to be literary without vanity, and scientific without ostentation, — any lady who has occasion for all this will have great reason for

had of all her powers, the very grace and majesty of her bearing, the peculiar charm of her conversation and hospitality, for her large views, her profound reverence for God's word, for her wisdom in counsel, her ceaseless benevolence, for her high aims, and untiring energy in doing good in the world, she was largely indebted to that single year of school-life in the Young Ladies' Seminary at Wethersfield.

gratitude that she ever enjoyed the privilege of sitting under the instruction of my dearly beloved and most highly revered teacher." — *Mary Lyon.*

"It was not enough, in his view, for a rational being to be positively useful. He held it to be both his duty and his privilege to do good *to the extent of his capacity*. To fall short of this he considered morally wrong." — *Z. P. Grant.*

"The opening of his school in Byfield may be considered an era in the history of female education. His labors there, at Saugus, and at Wethersfield, have given an impulse to this all-important interest, which will continue to be felt in future generations. . . . Who can estimate the good which may result from his labors in future ages and distant regions? While the lives of such are in this world greatly underrated, they will in the future receive their full meed of honor. While Cæsar and Bonaparte shall search in vain for their laurels, such persons as Hannah More, Robert Raikes, and Joseph Emerson, will wear their crowns of unfading glory." — *Rev. S. Chapin, D.D., President of Columbian College, Washington, D.C.*

"He had more of the character commended by our Saviour in Nathanael than any person I ever knew. He was an Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile. His life, his preaching, his prayers, his conversation, were simplicity and sincerity. He knew not how to dissemble, nor to wear a mask. He was what he appeared to be: his face, his words, his whole conduct, and conversation laid bare his heart." — *Rev. Joel Hawes, D.D.*

Graduating at such a seminary, it was natural that she should choose at once the occupation of a teacher. She taught at first a private school in Cambridgeport. The next year, 1829, she was called to take charge of the young ladies' department in an academy at Medford; and this position she held until the spring of 1833. We have a graphic account of her personal appearance at that period of her life, given by a lady, who, when under ten years of age, was one of her pupils at Medford. "To my childish eyes," she says, "Miss Brigham was never any thing but a *queen*. Her presence was so sweetly noble, her voice so commanding in itself, her smile and manner with her pupils so persuasive: her very step was dignity. When she came into church, leading her boarding-scholars, she passed my father's pew as she walked up the middle aisle, and with her pupils occupied the last two pews on the minister's left hand. And I always watched for them with an interest far deeper, I fear, than that with which I listened to the sermon. Her position in the church was such that her face was always visible to me; and I can see her now *so plainly*, sitting with her scholars in such quiet dignity; a look at one of them, when

needed, expressing as much as Christ's to Peter. I loved her with a childish devotion, and have always had her as a mental ideal before me, only it was combined with a little feeling of awe; yet I believed that none could be so sweetly majestic."

At the same time a gentleman now in mercantile life was a lad of twelve years in the boys' department of the same academy. He did not come under the instruction of Miss Brigham, but met her daily at the house where they both boarded. And it is indicative of her singular power to impress herself upon the attention of every one whom she met, that he has now such distinct recollections of her. "I remember her," he writes, "as tall, stately, and dignified, but most affable, courteous, and natural in her manners; well informed, and able to converse upon all subjects that came up at the table. She showed me much kindness in our personal intercourse, and had, as I believe, the respect and affection of her scholars. I do not think I ever heard a loud or harsh word from her. Nor do I remember a single instance of liberty taken with her, or any offensive remark or epithet applied to her, such as boys are so ready to bestow upon their elders, and of which the

gentleman who was their own teacher had plenty." With this same boy Miss Brigham conversed, probably with a definite and far-reaching intent, upon the importance of cultivating the habit of accurate observation, illustrating her meaning by an incident in her own experience. "Going out early one morning, she passed a man on the street. Her eye could have been upon him but a moment; and yet, when afterwards she learned that he was a fugitive from justice, she gave such a minutely detailed and full account of his dress, person, and appearance, that he was subsequently easily identified and arrested." Thus she began early to teach others to cultivate what she herself so highly valued, — the habit of quick and thoughtful observation.

But more than this, it was no small triumph for a young lady to achieve, so to gain the attention of a little girl and a little boy, that the very movements of her person and the words of her lips should be distinctly remembered by them half a century afterwards. The achievement itself discloses the trend of Mrs. Furber's early culture, and indicates that she then believed in the immortality of that influence which people are constantly exert-

ing upon those around them through what they often regard as their trivial words and deeds, and that she also had in view the possibility of accomplishing immortal good by simply doing little things for a good purpose and in the best way.

In the spring of 1833 Miss Brigham was invited by Rev. Dr. Lindsley, then pastor of the Park-street Church, Boston, to become a member of his household, for the purpose, not only of instructing his children, but also of rendering a service which would enable him to prosecute to better advantage his own studies. It explains, in part at least, the well-known fact of Mrs. Furber's own proficiency in theological science, that she copied for Dr. Lindsley the notes of the entire course of Dr. N. W. Taylor's lectures on systematic theology.

Miss Brigham, in September of 1834, was married to Rev. David Peabody, who two years before had been ordained to the ministry, and installed pastor of the First Church in Lynn. Her residence in that city was brief, as the delicate health of Mr. Peabody could not endure the rough sea-air to which he was there exposed. The next year he received a call from the Calvinistic church, Worces-

ter, and was installed its pastor. As Mr. Peabody failed to recover his health, it was recommended by his physician that he spend the winter of 1836–37 at the South. But he had no means to defray the expense. Mrs. Peabody's tact and energy, however, were equal to the emergency. After considering the question a short time, she said, "We will go." They sailed from Boston, Nov. 13, and reached their proposed place of residence in Louisiana, Dec. 8. Immediately a school was opened for the young people of the more wealthy families. Twenty-one scholars were obtained, and thus the expenses of a winter residence in that warm climate were defrayed. In the spring they returned to Worcester; and Mr. Peabody, with invigorated health, resumed pastoral work. In 1838 he was appointed professor of rhetoric in Dartmouth College. He accepted the appointment, and moved to Hanover, where he remained till his death, which occurred in 1839.

Professor Peabody, like his wife, was commanding in personal appearance, dignified and refined in manners. One who remembers them well describes them as "a splendid couple," adding, that "when they appeared together upon the sidewalks

in Worcester, the people, friends and strangers alike, instinctively turned to look at them. No other such couple in those days was ever seen on the streets of that city." Mr. Peabody was a man of high scholarship, an eloquent preacher, a faithful and self-sacrificing pastor, and successful in his brief professorship. His rank as a minister and preacher is indicated by the fact that a short account of his life has been placed in one of the volumes of Sprague's "Commemorative Notices of Distinguished American Clergymen."

Upon the death of her husband, Mrs. Peabody was thrown upon her own resources. One of her brothers kindly opened to her his elegant home in Boston, where she could have lived at ease, held position in the most cultivated society, and at times enjoyed foreign travel. She was grateful for this generous offer. Few were better fitted than she to improve to the utmost the advantages of such a life. She could easily have been a leader in the highest and most literary circles. But by instinct, as well as by culture, she was self-reliant. And then she had not forgotten the great lessons taught her during that one year at Wethersfield. Loyal, therefore, to

her grand purpose of rendering some Christly service to the world, with much prayer, and with that courage and executive energy which never failed her, she opened a boarding-school for young ladies near the college in Hanover. And there she found ample scope for her extraordinary administrative ability, as well as for her passion to be useful, until she was married to Dr. Furber, and came to Newton. Those ten years constitute an era in her life. That school was to her what the seminary at Ipswich was to Miss Grant, and Mount Holyoke was to Miss Lyon, — a splendid arena for the execution of a definite and high purpose in respect to the education of young women. Yet at the outset the school was regarded by not a few as a hazardous undertaking. Many of her friends even did not understand how well fitted she was to found and conduct such an institution. But one who knew her and her school well affirms that "the enterprise was successful in a marked degree. Her energy, skill, and force overcame every difficulty."

Class after class passed out from Mrs. Peabody's school and presence, touched with an inspiration which never came to them from any other person before or afterwards. Many of her pupils now

living, as they look back to those days of her earlier power and glory, speak of their teacher in terms not easily understood by those who never knew her. Indeed, no words, however extravagant, spoken in praise of Mrs. Peabody, seem now to satisfy her living scholars. Nor was her extraordinary influence confined to her school. It is the recent statement of one of her pupils, that "she reigned" not only in the school, but also in the community, and "without seeming to do so;" and was the "counsellor for the wise and learned, as well as for the ignorant and foolish." Burdened with cares, she was yet constantly interested in works of charity. It is said of her, that in those days "her time was so carefully held as a gift to be used in the service of humanity, that no one who sought sympathy in trouble, or assistance in distress, was neglected. All who asked received."

But nothing was more prominent in her character, even at that time, than her sympathy for the oppressed. She saw clearly the rights of the individual, had a keen sense of justice, and her indignation burned hotly against every form of injustice. Her residence for a winter at the South had served

only to deepen her abhorrence of the Southern institution. Not many months before her death, advocating the work of the American Missionary Association, she penned these words: "Where is there deeper degradation than in our Southern States? I passed the winter of 1836–37 in Louisiana, and saw *heathenism* in its most repulsive forms. I thought God was visiting the sins of the whites upon themselves by the debasing influence they received from the blacks whom they had so brutalized." Still she was candid in her judgment. She had some charity for the Southern-born, but a hearty contempt for the Northern-born, who, going to the South, adopt Southern views, and also Southern manners, in their treatment of our missionaries and teachers who are laboring among their colored people. "Men and women," she wrote, "carry their heads high, and treat with contempt those, 'the latchet of whose shoes' they are 'not worthy to unloose.' I can conceive that people of Southern birth should feel bitterly and strongly at the loss of their slaves. I found that class, *before emancipation*, among the really intelligent slaveholders, very tolerant of my antislavery opinions, and they defended the system only on the ground of expe-

diency; while men of Northern birth, holding a *few* slaves, were the hardest masters, and the boldest defenders of the 'institution.'"

The origin of her convictions upon the subject of American slavery she had no wish to conceal. Writing, only last May, to a lady missionary laboring at the South, in explanation of her own intense interest in the education of the colored people, she remarked, "My mother was one of the earliest abolitionists. I was trained in abhorrence of slavery, and have sheltered the fleeing fugitive in my own attic for days, when the emissaries of the master were in the neighborhood, hunting for his property, and *our laws* — shame on them! — made such aid a crime. Not one of my household knew of the presence of '*the likely slave-woman*' in my attic. I was then the widow of Professor Peabody of Dartmouth College, and escaped suspicion, only because it was not to be supposed, that, *in my position*, I would carry my principles thus far. When the hunters had departed, with a few trusted antislavery friends she was sent on her way to freedom, and she reached it in safety. I only regret that I am not now young enough to labor personally among those so eager

for knowledge, and therefore I do what I may to help those who can and do work for the race *so wronged*, and not yet *righted*."

Writing recently to another correspondent, Mrs. Furber said, "You referred to me as 'an abolitionist of the original stamp.' Yes, I was unflinchingly one, when to be so was considered a disgrace in the circle in which I moved. A friend of mine, who loved and respected me most sincerely, once said to me, 'I cannot bear to have your name associated with abolitionists. A gentleman whom you think highly of said to me the other day that it was to him a perfect riddle how *you* (adding some flattering words) could have adopted such views, and could allow yourself to be classed with the advocates of such sentiments.' I replied, 'They are sentiments God approves, and they are sure to prevail. I am proud to be called an abolitionist; and that gentleman, and every other who opposes the good work, may live to be ashamed of their opposition, and I hope will live to see the right triumph.' So you see I enlisted early, and for life, and I have joy in the memory."

In these reminiscences are disclosed, not only the convictions, but also the character, of our friend.

She could educate in her school refined young ladies coming from some of the wealthiest and most aristocratic families in the land, and at the same time publicly take her stand for the rights of the poor and helpless slave. In that one act of sheltering the fleeing slave-woman in the attic of her house in Hanover, broke forth the free and daring spirit of the ancient Deborah. This woman could, like that one, had it been needful, have gone upon the battle-field in defence of the oppressed.

But the time had come for another change in her life. Leaving her school, so dear to her, the numerous friends she had gathered around her, and the many pleasant associations binding her to Hanover, she came again into the position of a pastor's wife. And she did not come to this town and parish to be idle. She had her life-plan, and, wherever she lived, she was bent upon the execution of it. Her sphere of usefulness here was not as conspicuous as had been that at Hanover, but it was larger. She could reach more homes here than there, and touch directly a far larger number of hearts and lives. Ample opportunity would be given her here to perform a much greater amount

of quiet and unostentatious labor, and this would be to her taste; for with all her strength of character, and courage in standing for truth, for principle and the right, she had a true womanly modesty, which always made her shrink from the public gaze. She loved home, its quiet life, and all its little, unseen, dutiful, and wifely services, as only a true woman can love them. But she had a heart large enough to fill her home, and also the parish, and then to reach out to all who needed her sympathy and help in the great and wide world. And, if any would know how well she filled this ever-widening sphere of usefulness, let them read the more than forty impressive letters and communications which have been put into my hands, — some of them long enough to make each a sermon, and nearly all of them written by ladies belonging to this church and congregation, who, of course, have had rare opportunities to learn the facts, — and they will even then gain only an imperfect conception of a life-work singularly varied and far-reaching, and yet so modestly concealed in many particulars, that members of her own family did not know it all.

Moreover, she was eminently wise in counsel, and

so was constantly called upon to give advice. It was true of her, as it was of Deborah of old, that "all the people came to her for judgment." A lady who has known Mrs. Furber for twenty-five years has remarked, that "no delineation of her character would be complete, which did not speak of her as a counsellor to those in perplexity and needing advice." And she added, "Her judgment seemed to me infallible. I never should have thought of such a thing as calling in question the correctness of any of her opinions. If *she* had told me the grass was blue, I should have believed it."

One secret of the remarkable wisdom of her advice was, that she read character so quickly and accurately. "She always judged such righteous judgment!" says one who knew her long and well. "Others might judge from appearances; but she never did. She had the rare gift of discovering one's *motive*, and she kindly judged by that, and not by one's faulty *actions only*, as so many do." A lady with whom Mrs. Furber was officially connected in the management of a charitable institution used to call her "our Minerva." Poor workingmen who could not afford the expense of legal advice came to Mrs. Furber with their questions in

law, and she studied their cases, and gave them legal counsel, which, doubtless, was good. Nor was it simply her advice that was prized: the manner in which it was given often touched the heart, and was never forgotten. "I went," says a lady who was comparatively a stranger to her, — "I went to ask her opinion concerning something which I thought of doing; and she could not have been more interested, more ready to think of the best means and the best people to further the project, if I had had the claim of an old friend upon her. And the Friday morning before she died I had a note from her. She rose early in the morning, as she wrote me, to tell me of something that she had learned the evening before, and to give me advice, which was really the best, and which I followed. It may not be thought a great thing for an invalid to rise earlier than usual to write a note that is to save a stranger from coming into an awkward position; but it does show that there was something great *behind it.*"

For many years Mrs. Furber taught a ladies' Bible class. It met at the same hour as the sabbath school, but in a room by itself. The giving of

biblical instruction was work after her own heart. She was practised in the art of teaching. With the utmost ease she kept the class well in hand, and held it rigorously to the lesson. With a quiet dignity that was irresistible she put aside "personal experiences, family histories, sceptical questions," not pertinent, and all discussions foreign, to the subject before them. References, however, to the bearing of any of the truths of the lesson upon practical Christianity were always in order. The great doctrines of revelation were carefully stated, their truth was established by Scripture, and their practical worth was graphically illustrated. Questions of conscience were discussed, objections and misapprehensions were removed. It was an hour of intense mental and spiritual life. The instruction came as often from the heart as the head, and in manner was frequently most tender and impressive. It was always eminently quickening and helpful, and in many instances wonderfully and most kindly adapted to the needs of individuals present.

Certain characteristics of Mrs. Furber, in which was much of the hiding of her power, were clearly revealed in those hours with her Bible class. Her scholars had unusual opportunities to see what

manner of woman she was, especially in her faith, and principles of action.

First, she had a profound reverence for God's word. Its authority with her was divine and final. Secondly, she had an unquestioning belief in the wisdom and beneficence of all the institutions and ordinances of God. Any wilful neglect of the divinely appointed means of grace in her view betrayed either gross ignorance or shocking impiety. Thirdly, she set a high value especially upon services of public worship. She led the devotions of her Bible class; and her prayers were remarkable for their genuineness, their reverence, and impressiveness. Fourthly, she never forgot to be *womanly*, and thus in example, as well as precept, was ever setting forth the highest ideal of womanhood. Fifthly, her religion was eminently practical, rather than sentimental. She used the Bible as if it were indeed "a lamp unto our feet, a light unto our path." Every doctrine of revelation, as she taught, is for immediate use in the formation of character and the ordering of conduct. She was constantly making application of the truths of the gospel, teaching "the fear of the Lord," "good will towards men," systematic giving, and urging others to en-

gage in all kinds of benevolent and helpful services. Sixthly, she believed in being what we seem to be, in practising what we teach, in living up to our avowed faith and principles. Her admiration for genuineness in character was intense, and with her whole nature she abhorred insincerity and duplicity. Seventhly, she was naturally a modest and retiring woman; and yet her passion for being useful led her often to exhibit great boldness in throwing the influence of her opinion and example on the side of truth and righteousness. It was not simply a principle with her, but also the joy of her heart, to sacrifice self for the sake of being helpful to others. She was naturally social and cheerful; but she enjoyed social life mainly because of the opportunities it gave her for making others happier and better. Eighthly, it was an article of her faith that no *obligations* are trivial, and that fidelity in what are often called "little duties" may be followed by the grandest results. She valued the habit of obedience to all rightful authority, and magnified the importance of insisting upon such obedience in the training of children. Ninthly, she gave in herself a fresh illustration of the nature of true Christian friendship, and also of its immeasurable

worth in a world like this. These several characteristics of our friend, and these principles of action by which she was controlled, are variously and happily set forth in the following extracts from letters written by members of her Bible class: —

"I recall her in the sabbath-school class the first morning we moved into the small room, as she rose, with that quiet grace and dignity which were a part of her, and asked God's blessing and help. I wish I could repeat that solemn, concise prayer. She conducted the entire service in a manner that increased my love and reverence for her, and prevented me from ever absenting myself without sufficient reason. She was my ideal of perfect womanhood, and I loved her with a great love while she lived; and, as with sorrow I mourn her loss, I feel that her crown must be among the brightest in God's kingdom."

"From the time of entering the room she seemed, by her presence, to impress one with the thought that we had met to study *the word of God,* to discover its deepest meaning, and its relation to our present and future life. She had evidently spent a great deal of time in studying the lesson, and had used all the helps she could command. She settled every point in theology by the word of God. Her explanations were lucid, and in argument she was clear and exhaustive."

"Her teaching made such a strong impression upon my mind, that I frequently thought over, during the week, some particular point which she had emphasized in the class the previous sabbath. I remember one thing she impressed strongly upon us, and that

was, the duty of parents to require prompt and entire obedience from their children. I have frequently recalled her teachings when I have felt like faltering in my work with my large family. How often I used to wish that I had such judgment and sound common sense, and such a kindly spirit, to aid me in training my children aright!"

"To have been a member of Mrs. Furber's class was to receive such instructions as come from no common lips. Each sabbath, as I came from the class, I felt that I had gained something which would be a help to me during the week, and make me stronger in the right. She impressed me with the fact that it was *my personal* duty and privilege to be *doing something* to make this world better."

"Her instruction was so full of wisdom and of the rich fruits of research, always uttered in such choice language, and was so full of interest! Mrs. Furber herself was of such a cheerful disposition, and had such relish for the humorous side of a question, that nothing she said could possibly be dull, or fail to fix our attention. She was quite willing, when every-day topics came up for discussion, to digress from the lessons: still, when she thought the discussion had been carried far enough for the general good, she did not hesitate to arrest it. And I can hear her now, in her stately and dignified manner, say, 'Ladies, we have digressed too far from our subject.' No question that could be put ever found her unprepared, and her stores of knowledge seemed inexhaustible. I have never listened to a woman, on any occasion, who would so interest and instruct as she did, and I always looked forward to that Sunday noon with peculiar pleasure."

"I always felt that she *practised* what she taught, and I believed

that her influence would be felt through others far beyond our thought. She always seemed to me a *common-sense* Christian, not lifted above this practical world, but well fitted to live in it, and to help others live in it, no matter who they were. Enough for her if they were in trouble, and needed aid, advice, or sympathy."

"As I recall those delightful hours, it seems to me she never let pass one gathering of the class in which she did not make some practical application of the lesson to each of us, either as members of the same church, or as mothers in our own homes, or as neighbors, or in our relation to our servants or to those who are in any wise dependent upon us. She often strove to impress upon us the fact, that, even in our social gatherings, we ought to remember, not only to be courteous, but also to *minister* to all, reminding us that 'Christ came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister.' How many times have I heard her say, 'I do not think the ladies should come together *to enjoy each other* so much as to welcome strangers, sympathize with the otherwise neglected, comfort the troubled, and show themselves *sisters*'! She urged systematic giving also, saying, 'When people have no system in laying aside for benevolent purposes, as a rule they have very little idea what they give, and probably give far less than they think.'"

"I remember how decided she was in her scrupulous regard for holy time. One trait of character that touched *me* more closely than any other was her deep and wonderful sympathy with all forms of suffering, physical pain, affliction, poverty, loss of friends, longing for an education or for growth spiritual or mental. All needs were understood by her, appreciated, and sympathized with; and if, in any form, her hand or heart could relieve, to know the opportunity with her was to improve it. Twenty-two

years I have known her, and through all she has been a steady and helpful *friend* to me, — as a young, impulsive girl, as a happy young bride, as a mother rejoicing over her first-born, and as a woman acquainted with grief. She never failed me. I have gone to her in joy and in sorrow, and always she had just the right, helpful word ready for me. She doubled our joys, and halved our sorrows, by sharing them with us. I never left her presence that I did not feel somehow ennobled, encouraged, inspired, by her bright enthusiasm and her brave outlook over, not only the world, but the needs of every human heart. She seemed to find pure happiness in doing good, and in doing it continually. Year after year she seemed to rejoice in every new occasion given her for being helpful."

But this Bible class, which will be memorable in the history of this church, was only one sphere of Mrs. Furber's influence. She did much to form the opinions, and mould the characters, of educated people. The best disciplined and most learned minds quickly recognized her superior character, and were often profoundly impressed by that singular power of her presence, and that ready and practical wisdom of her words, which she could not conceal. She did not, however, belong to that class designated in recent years as "strong-minded women." She was ready to make personal sacrifices, even to the extent of setting aside, for a time, her unassuming and retiring habits, if the public good

demanded it: but nothing could have tempted her to *appear*, still less to *be*, mannish; for she was firm in the conviction that the exhibition of any such quality of character would not have increased, but rather diminished, her power and usefulness in society. It was no ambition of hers to address popular assemblies, or to figure conspicuously on any public arena. She did not belong to that class, by no means small in our time, who will do nothing for the weal of others, unless they can appear as leaders in public movements, as presidents of societies of long and high-sounding names, or can preside at crowded conventions and anniversaries, or see their own names paraded in public prints. In her judgment a Christian woman who would wield the most effective and best influence in the community can never, in a single instance, afford to unsex herself. She had, if possible, less regard for an unwomanly woman than for an unmanly man. And yet her strength and activity of mind were prodigious. Her ability in the administration of business and in the discussion of business questions was remarkable. The acquisition of knowledge was easy to her. She was at home in the work of careful research and investigation;

still, much of her knowledge seemed almost intuitive. Her handling of great problems in political and moral science, in biblical interpretation, in systematic and pastoral theology, and in other high departments of scholarship, was masterly. Her mental vision was wide and far-reaching. Her intellectual processes were rapid: she seemed to see a subject at once in all its relations. It was her habit to keep herself well informed in the higher realms of thought by reading, as well as thinking and talking, much upon great themes. A minister of the gospel could hardly have spent an hour in her company without learning something new in his own department of knowledge, and going away with some larger idea of his vocation, and some fresh inspiration for his work. She could converse intelligently and with ease upon national questions and policies. Few are the public men who could not have been instructed in conference with her. A gentleman who has had large acquaintance with able men, and who knew Mrs. Furber well for more than thirty years, affirms that he has never yet met with a person who was her superior in power to grasp and master great questions. "She was," he says, "among women what Daniel Webster was among men."

But, with all her intellectual power, she was the true woman still. The charm of a sweet modesty and of all womanly graces never for a moment forsook her. "For twenty-five years," writes a cultured lady, "I have regarded Mrs. Furber as one of the most remarkable women I have ever known. Her queenly bearing, her fine conversational gifts, both in felicity of expression and richness of voice, her wonderful strength of character, and her surpassing sweetness of soul, and tenderness of manner towards all suffering humanity, made her a model woman, — a splendid flower of Christian womanhood, admired and loved by all who had the good fortune to come under her influence. I always felt like sitting at her feet, and I never left her without a sense of pride that I could call her my friend. It seems to me the crowning trait was her quick, keen perception of *right*, and the steadfast adherence to it."

Mrs. Furber felt a deep interest in the young people of the parish, especially in the young ladies. In little ways she won their confidence, drew out their special gifts, made them feel at home with her, and, before they knew it, awakened within

them some noble purpose, or roused them to some high service. She did not think it beneath her to cultivate that accomplishment, too often neglected, of receiving calls with such winning grace and genuine cordiality as to make the interview, however brief, both a pleasure and a blessing to the caller. And she was particularly happy in the kind welcome she always gave to the young.

One lady informs us that when a girl, and about to leave home for a boarding-school, her mother requested her to call upon Mrs. Furber. "I had in a large degree," she says, "imbibed a feeling of awe in regard to her; so that to call alone upon her seemed something quite formidable to me. But when she received me with so much kindness and graceful affability, so adapted her conversation to the ideas and anticipations of a young girl, my feeling of timidity vanished; and from that day to this I have never felt any thing but perfect ease, and quiet assurance of her friendly interest, while in her presence. This is a very trifling incident; but its effect upon me was not so."

"She always used to meet me," writes another, "in such a cordial way, with some kindly salutation, or with some pleasant inquiry, or speak in regard

to some project in which both she and I were interested. Somehow, whenever I came into her presence, I could throw off that coldness and that reserve which I think are natural to me, and speak with perfect freedom, being fully assured, by her earnest attention and look, that I had in her a ready friend and sympathizer."

A young lady burdened with trouble came diffidently to Mrs. Furber for counsel and sympathy; and the result was, that she was not only comforted and strengthened, but led to give herself to Christ, and afterwards to confess him before men.

Another remarks, "I was a young and timid girl when I first knew her, and I cannot recall *how* I first met and came to feel so much at home with her. She had a rare tact with the young; for, while I revered her as my superior in every respect, she made me feel on an equality with her while in her presence, and I could tell her all that was in my heart. I never shrank from meeting her, but always welcomed her approach. In my early teaching-days a call from Mrs. Furber, or a visit with her, was one of my greatest pleasures; and her words of cheer and counsel will never be forgotten. She could draw out what was good in

us, and help us to put it to some use. We young people used to talk over our pastor's wife, and we agreed, that, while some very good people talked well *to* us, Mrs. Furber made *us* talk, and this was especially profitable to us. I ever felt that love to God and to her fellow-men was the ruling principle in her life. My love to missions was strengthened more by her *doings* than *sayings*. Had I been in trouble of any kind, upon no one whom I ever knew could I so willingly have called. Yet I was made to realize that she had strength as well as heart."

It indicates the variety of her accomplishments, that this profoundly thoughtful woman could be young with the young for the joy of it, and yet in that joy never forget her high purpose to use all her gifts in the service of her Lord. "We school-girls," remarks one who was only temporarily in the parish, "always felt that Mrs. Furber entered into our enjoyments, and it was a treat to go and see her. Yet she nearly always introduced into the conversation something about work at the South, or about home-missions, in such a manner as to make us long to be doing something ourselves."

Mrs. Furber was no ascetic. Naturally she was companionable, and on principle she cultivated every social gift. Few could tell a good story better than she, or listen to one with a keener relish. The Puritans have been charged with being austere and melancholy; but the truth is, they were a far more mirthful people than were the red-handed atheists of France. Mrs. Furber was a Puritan in her reverent faith, and in her dauntless courage in standing for truth and the right; and so was she, also, in her serene hopefulness, her invariable cheerfulness, and her keen enjoyment of life.

But what language can adequately describe her ministrations to the needy and the troubled? For, after all, in this department of her wide activity were disclosed chiefly the depths and the heights of her character. The simple words of a Swedish girl were significant. She had been a domestic in Mrs. Furber's family, and knew how often carefully prepared gifts were borne from her kitchen to the rooms of the sick and the homes of the hungry; and, upon hearing of Mrs. Furber's death, her first utterance was, "How the poor people will miss her!" This exclamation, perhaps, may not have *on earth* the sound of the highest eulogy; but it may *in heaven.*

In those few words is condensed a long history of hidden beneficence, which can be unfolded only on that day when a voice from the throne of glory shall be heard saying, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

One to whom our departed friend, in her delicate way, had shown kindness and sympathy when they were much needed, exclaimed out of her bleeding heart, "It does not seem as if there could be any family to whom her death is such a blow as it is to ours; and yet I suppose there are hundreds of others who feel the same way. There was never any one just like her before, and there never will be again."

She always gave of her means and sympathy intelligently; yet sometimes, when the case was a plain one, she gave also impulsively. In one instance, a poor woman in extreme destitution, whom she knew well, called upon her for help. She was a pitiable object as she presented herself; and Mrs. Furber instantly took off some of her own clothing, and put them upon her.

It was her desire to be wise in giving, as in every thing she did. Her theory was, that we should

never help people to be shiftless and dependent, but rather help them to help themselves. Consequently she often, in a way which would not excite suspicion, made careful examination of cases of supposed need and suffering, sending some one, perhaps her own servant-girl, "to spy out the land" (to use her own language); and if the land was found to be really destitute and dreary, yet worthy, she would soon make it flow with milk and honey.

But not simply the poor did she aid. Her heart was full of sympathy for all tried and troubled ones. One who, on account of an infirmity, is largely excluded from society, speaking of her death, says, "To me the loss is irreparable. She made up much of the happiness of my life by her warm interest in me, her ready counsels, and her wonderful kindness and love, shown in a thousand ways. The shock of her death is very great to me. My heart cries out bitterly for her."

Mrs. Furber was not above doing little favors. No act of kindness seemed too small for her to do. She gave toys to children. She was always careful to acknowledge in some pleasant manner the least kindness shown to herself. She made others happy by expressing in some delicate way her own appro-

bation of whatever she saw in them that was praiseworthy. She did many things simply to *please* others. I have been informed, that, "after her death, a small photograph of herself (almost the only one, indeed, in existence, as she was very reluctant to sit for her picture) was found in the possession of a poor colored woman in a distant city, whom she had befriended, and who had begged from her this keepsake. The coming to light of this picture in the most unexpected place is the revealing of only one of the thousands of little acts of goodness and grace which Mrs. Furber performed. Made known by no design or means of her own, they show how she hid herself in her deeds." As another instance of her kindness in little things, when the daily paper came, instead of scanning it eagerly for the latest news, as most of us do, she often read whole pages of advertisements, hoping to find some suitable place or work for this one and that one who she knew were in need, and perhaps suffering for lack of employment; and, if successful in her search, she would cut out the advertisements, and send the slips, with a pleasant note, to the persons she had in view. She also accomplished much good by a wide distribution of useful reading. She

often sent by express to various parts of the South, for the colored people, large bundles of religious papers; and she had the satisfaction of knowing that they were received with thankfulness, and eagerly read. She subscribed for quite a number of periodicals, and ordered them sent to particular persons. Several teachers in the public schools of this city have received the paper entitled "Our Dumb Animals," without knowing from whom it came. She could not endure that even the brutes should suffer from neglect or cruelty, and therefore she ordered this paper to be sent to teachers, hoping that they might thus be induced to impress upon the children the duty of kindness to animals. Keepers of livery-stables have received the same paper from the same source.

Her benevolent sympathies were continually going out beyond the limits of this parish. For many years she was one of the three directors of the Newton Home for Orphan and Destitute Girls. "To her wisdom and mature judgment," says one of the associate directors, "we always turned for advice in every matter connected with the Home." And another member of the board speaks of her in such just and beautiful words that I cannot help

quoting a few of them. "For the last ten years," she remarks, "Mrs. Furber's society has been a well-spring of delight to my spirit, for her religion was the religion of humanity. Her heart and mind rejoiced in every progressive movement to purify and elevate mankind. I have frequently felt reproved for intruding upon her so often, when she had so many demands upon her time, not only from her own church, but from all over the country. And though often weary, and suffering from pain continually, she yet always received me with a smile and a genuine cordiality. Oh, she was a rare character! — so modest, yet replete with the richest culture, and with manners and address that would have adorned a queen. A few days before I left the city, I took some of the dear little girls of the Home to call upon Mrs. Furber, and had them sing some of their sweet songs, and recite some of their pieces. The attitude of Mrs. Furber was full of love and tenderness as she listened to them, and gazed into their faces. Her gratification was a delight to me, and I am thankful that I had that privilege."

Mrs. Furber was also deeply interested in all departments of missionary work. She presided, as long as she was able to do so, at the meetings of

the Ladies' Benevolent Society connected with this church; and the example of her own devotion to the work of the society was an inspiration to all its members. The value of home-missions to every interest of the country and to the kingdom of Christ, in her view, could not be over-estimated. But especially, and with all her heart, did she enter into the educational and missionary work among the colored people of the South. From the time when, in her childhood home, she learned from her mother's lips the sad story of the wrongs of that people, her own interest in them seems to have grown deeper and deeper up to the day of her death. It is impossible to describe in a few words her varied labors in their behalf. Only hints can be given. She and her Bible class supported scholars in the university at Atlanta and in schools at other places in the South. She alone aided numbers of worthy pupils who are now laboring as teachers among the people of their own race. Nor was she satisfied to give them merely pecuniary assistance. She entered into correspondence with them, and continued to exchange letters with many of them as long as she lived.

Some years ago a young colored man of high

promise had decided to abandon his studies on account of his poverty. But, as he was upon the point of leaving school, assistance came from Mrs. Furber; and a correspondence between them commenced, which was terminated only by her death. He is now the able and successful pastor of a large church at the South. "During the summer of 1878," he says in a recent letter, "I had the pleasure of visiting my benefactor in her beautiful home. Her cordial welcome and deep interest, shown by her kind words of instruction and advice, made me feel that she was a grand, good Christian lady, in whose presence it was a blessed favor to be. When I left, she put an envelope into my side coat-pocket, saying, 'God bless you! Be useful.' On opening the envelope, I found twenty dollars enclosed. At another time she sent me fifty dollars to be spent in travelling, in books, or in any way which would tend to enlarge my usefulness. She has contributed several valuable books to my small library. Through her influence a minister's library was established [in a church in Georgia], and she was planning to start another in this place. Mrs. Furber desired that only the Lord and the persons helped should know of her good works; and there-

fore she always said to me in connection with her favors, 'Make no public mention of me.' I hope I am not betraying a trust in speaking of these things now. 'After death, the judgment.'"

Our departed friend also took part in Mrs. Comstock's work among the refugees in Kansas. She repeatedly sent sums, varying from ten to one hundred dollars, to aid the Industrial School for Colored People in that State. Still more interested was she in the Homestead Plan. A letter was recently received from a young colored man in Columbus, Kan., in which he says that the last home which was established on this plan was called "The Furber Homestead," and that Mrs. Furber sent him the hundred dollars to establish it. At the same time she asked him if he knew of any other worthy colored man who needed to be helped in the same way. Indeed, it was her practice not to wait to be solicited. In sending aid to one scholar at the South, she often made inquiry for other promising pupils who were in need. This department of her benevolent work rapidly increased, until she found herself keeping up a constant correspondence with teachers or students, or perhaps both, in Chattanooga, Atlanta, Hampton, Tuskegee, and Columbus.

And it touches our hearts to remember now, that in recent months, while, in much bodily weakness and suffering, she was keeping up this large correspondence with her beneficiaries in distant States, the poor and neglected people near her own home were not forgotten. She was always sending them pecuniary and other assistance, or listening to the long stories of their wants and troubles, making their cause her own, and letting them know that in her they still had a friend.

Her life was always filled with a great variety of affairs. "She carried along," writes one of her friends, "numerous and weighty matters; gave attention to the wants of the distressed, the anxious, those burdened with care, the perplexed, the poor, the troubled, the doubting, in the parish; to charities at a distance, — the education of the freedmen at the South; to the amenities and refined courtesies of life in a wide circle of choice, cultivated, and earnest friends, mingled with which was always something for the higher part of life. Yet all these constituted a portion only of her work; but she performed all so naturally and instinctively, that it seemed as if she was almost unconscious of her responsibilities. And the less she could show

herself in her labors, the better her work suited her."

It will be admitted by those who knew Mrs. Furber best, that, in all these multiplied departments of her active life, she was a model Christian woman, and especially a model minister's wife. Not all wives of ministers have the health, or the time, or the means to do in every particular as she did; still her character and life may safely be set forth as a rare example of what a minister's wife should be and do. She had received a wondrous inspiration towards all that is highest and best from one teacher; and what honor could she have coveted more than to become herself a similar inspiration to others?

She seems never for a moment to have lost sight of her ideal of Christian service. During the last two years of her life she was too much of an invalid to leave her house; but when she could no longer attend church, nor teach her Bible class, nor preside at the meetings of the Ladies' Benevolent Society, her usefulness appears not to have diminished, but rather to have increased; for then she multiplied her letters, writing to all classes of persons, near and distant, needing sympathy or counsel, and also enlarged her gifts to objects of charity. She often

remarked, we are told, that she hoped the rheumatism, from which she suffered, would spare her hands, that she might continue to write; and it did. She wrote, upon an average, five letters a day, a large part of which were written before breakfast. It was found, that, on the day but one before she ceased her labors, letters had been received *from* her by sixteen different persons.

A life of such abounding beneficence needs to be sustained by habits of devotion. Mrs. Furber gave a liberal portion of every day to prayer and to the reading of the Bible and religious books. It was her custom to read the Bible through in course once a year.

In the mean time no domestic or wifely duty was neglected. She made her home beautiful by giving expression in it to her own cultivated taste, and still more beautiful by making it a happy home to every member of the household. She was wont, of a sabbath evening, to sit down in the kitchen with her own servant-girls, and other girls invited in, and read with them God's word. Her reigning presence made that very dwelling memorable to ministers, and to all others, who, even for an hour, ever

shared her genial and graceful hospitality. As her strength failed and the end drew near, she read her Bible more and more. That word of God, which so long had been a light unto her feet, and which she had so often held up that it might shine upon the darkened pathway of others, now shone brighter than ever upon her own way, lighting up her future, and revealing to her ravished eye more and more clearly, as she passed on, her Lord and Saviour waiting in his glory to receive her; until finally, on the 19th of September last, earth faded away, and she entered into the heaven of her Redeemer's presence.

Many hearts are heavy with grief that she is gone; yet there is joy in our sorrow. This church is richer and mightier to-day because of her life and service in it. This entire parish is *illumined*, for the light of her example shines upon it. All these homes are dearer and more sacred, because the blessing of her love and prayers rests upon them.

How much sympathy has been felt and expressed for your beloved pastor! But if his loss is great, so is his comfort. Once she made his dwelling to him the dearest place on earth; but now she has made it the vestibule of heaven. The light of his

home has not gone out: it shines more resplendent than ever in the home just beyond. It is difficult for us to conceive of such fulness of life and service as ended. And it is not ended. No such servant of Christ can ever die, for Jesus himself has said, "Where I am, there shall also my servant be."

While she was yet with us, she marked with pencil some words in Keble's "Christian Year;" and these words, as we now listen to them, sound like her own last message to the beloved members of her Bible class, and to this entire church and people so dear to her: —

> "Think not of rest; though dreams be sweet,
> Start up, and ply your heavenward feet.
> Is not God's oath upon your head,
> Ne'er to sink back on slothful bed?
> Never again your loins untie,
> Nor let your torches waste and die,
> Till, when the shadows thickest fall,
> *Ye* hear your Master's midnight call."

"BLESSED IS THAT SERVANT WHOM HIS LORD, WHEN HE COMETH, SHALL FIND SO DOING."

APPENDIX.

REMARKS, BY PROFESSOR O. S. STEARNS, D.D.,

AT THE CLOSE OF A SERMON PREACHED ON THE SUNDAY FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF MRS. FURBER, SEPT. 24, 1882.

If by one word I could characterize Mrs. Furber as she appeared to me, it would be the word "Truth." There was truth in her very step, as, with the dignity of a princess, she walked about her home, or entered the house of God. There was truth in her eye, as in familiar conversation she sought a truthful answer to a truthful question. You might wince under it, but you could not evade it; not because it was cold and critical, but because it was sincere and pure. There was truth on her lips. With a heart charged with loving-kindness, she was ever on the alert to impart words of counsel, words of warning, and words of good cheer. There was truth in her heart, loving righteousness in God, and demanding righteousness among men, regarding every human being as bearing the image of God, and deserving the rights of divinely created men, whatever the race, whatever the

color, whatever the position in the scale of intelligence, wealth, or necessity. A truth-loving heart trembled instinctively towards a truth-needing heart. Hence, "when the ear heard her, then it blessed her; and, when the eye saw her, it gave witness unto her: because she delivered the poor that cried, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon her, and she caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. She put on righteousness, and it clothed her: her judgment was as a robe and a diadem." In her home, on the street, in the social circle, and in the work of the church, for the needy at home and the needy in foreign lands, she lived and died as truth's faithful illustration and truth's blessed incarnation. After the services at her funeral, a friend said to me, "It is a great thing to say of another what Dr. Wellman has just said of Mrs. Furber." — "Yes," I replied; "but the greater thing is, that it was all true." Ah, truth — truth springing out of the heart of Christ, who was the "Truth" — needs no eulogy. It is like God, whose righteousness is like "*the great mountains.*"

Can we but possess it, we may sing with Faber, —

> "Then on thy grandeur I will lay me down;
> Already life is heaven to me;
> No cradled child more softly lies than I —
> Come soon, Eternity."

REMINISCENCES OF MRS. FURBER,

BY MISS M. H. CORNELIUS.

When Dr. Wellman was requested to prepare a memorial sermon, he desired to receive suggestions in writing from those who had known Mrs. Furber best, to guide him in forming a true estimate of her character. Many letters were written, and placed in his hands, one of which is here given in full. It was written by one whose profession as a teacher was a bond of sympathy and an occasion of intimacy between herself and Mrs. Furber.

Newton Centre, Nov. 11, 1882.

We thought we knew Mrs. Furber well, and had the highest appreciation of her excellence. But, as we attempt to write of her, it seems impossible to do justice to her noble qualities. She was, in a good sense, many-sided. Almost any of her mental traits, or any aspect of her character, suggests another by contrast; and how can one write of them all?

But, whatever were her traits, they were all brought into harmony by her benevolence. I will try to tell something of what this has been to myself and to others.

I first saw Mrs. Furber in the year 1858 or 1859, but did not

know her well until June, 1860, when, with Dr. Furber, she came to see us in Roxbury. My brother-in-law, Rev. George B. Little, was then far gone in consumption. The deep sympathy which she expressed for Mrs. Little and for us all, her tenderness toward the children who were so soon to lose their father, made me feel that she was indeed a true friend. When it became necessary for us to seek a new home, her warm-hearted kindness was one thing which drew us to Newton Centre. We came here in October, 1861; and from that time to the end of her life on earth, Mrs. Furber has been to us what no other friend could be.

We soon found that she was caring for all our interests as if they were her own. In manifold ways she showed us kindness; but in none, perhaps, did she show more than by giving us in every perplexity her wise counsel. Her experience, her sympathy, her wisdom, all were freely imparted; and we learned to feel that we could not take any important step without consulting her. From that time to this, it has been my habit to go to her with all sorts of practical difficulties. Often, when spent with the labors of the day, I have gone to Mrs. Furber with some question that I could not see through. She would welcome me as if I were doing her a favor, attend earnestly to the matter, and, as it seemed, by her penetrating glance, throw a clear light upon it. Then she would give her own view of the case, with words of advice, and my way was plain. Perhaps a note by the next morning's mail would tell me what had been her thoughts over night. When I said that I feared I might be taxing her too much, she would reply, "Oh, no! I'm only *glad* if I can help you. Come to me at *any* time." Not many months ago, I said to her, "You do not know, dear Mrs. Furber, how much good you are

doing all the time to those who come to you for counsel." — "It seems to me," she answered, "that I do very little."

Her cheerfulness and elasticity and freshness had a most exhilarating influence. Many a time I have gone to see her because I needed a spring for some work to which I felt unequal. Her conversation almost never failed to give me the needed impulse. It was easier to work after breathing the atmosphere of her thoughts. She had, more than almost any one I ever knew, the faculty of encouraging others. Her cheerfulness was like sunshine: it brightened every thing it touched.

During my mother's sickness of three years and a half, Mrs. Furber was the most thoughtful and unwearied of friends. Her frequent notes, her tokens of remembrance, — fruit, flowers, whatever she could devise for the comfort of the invalid, — continually assured us of her sympathy. It would take long to tell how assiduously she endeavored to relieve the weary hours in the sick-room, how many things she planned and furnished, how she cared, not only for the sick one, but for those in attendance upon her.

Since my mother's death, Mrs. Furber's kindness to me has been redoubled. I know not how to give any adequate idea of it. She has seemed naturally to care for all my interests, often suggesting to me what I did not think of for myself. And, while she has been doing all this for us, she has been doing as much for many others. It would not be easy to number the persons, in the parish and out of it, who could give like testimony. Not from Mrs. Furber, so much as from the persons themselves, have I known for many years that she was their trusted friend. Nothing is more common now than to hear one and another

say, "I always went to Mrs. Furber with every thing." "I do not know what I shall do without her: I was just going to her with some things that troubled me." "She understood every thing, and she was so sympathizing." "Her advice was always good: she could see so *far!*" "She could see through people and through every subject." "She always knew what to say to everybody." "She made me feel so much *stronger*." "I don't know how she knew so much about cares which she did not have herself." "I don't know how I should ever have got along, if it had not been for Mrs. Furber." "I don't know what we shall do without her; but I'm thankful that we have her to *think* of." "Nobody knows the good that she was doing all the time."

Mrs. Furber used to say, "We are not sent into this world to live for ourselves." Even her fortitude in suffering was, in part, owing to her benevolence. She had a most unselfish way of bearing pain. When she had answered an inquiry respecting her health, she would immediately turn the subject, and make one forget that she was an invalid. It must have been the study of her life how she might be like Him who "came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister." "Ready to distribute, willing to communicate," "zealous of good works," "ready to every good work," she had a benevolence like that which the New Testament attributes to the early disciples. It was her delight to promote the welfare of all whom she could reach. She gave largely of her money to benevolent objects, and had always a sum in store consecrated to this use. But donations of money were only *one* expression of her love of giving. As a good steward of the manifold grace of God, she ministered to others of all the gifts she had received. How much *thought* she bestowed upon the contents of

the barrels that year after year were packed at her house for the home missionaries and the freedmen! A few years ago I received, late in the autumn, a letter about the needs of a home-missionary family in Minnesota. I asked Mrs. Furber if it would be suitable to mention the case to the Ladies' Benevolent Society of our church. Mrs. Furber replied that the society was already working for a home missionary in Wisconsin, but that, if I would collect articles for the Minnesota missionary, she would gladly have them packed at her house. She had in hand, she said, a sum of money intrusted to her for such uses, a portion of which she would add to her own contribution. Some of the most valuable articles were given by Mrs. Furber herself. She gave the minutest attention to every detail; bought, through friends who executed her commissions, a warm and long outside garment, a fur cap, arctic overshoes, and other articles for the missionary, that he might be well defended in his cold rides over the prairies; and for each member of the family she provided the most useful and acceptable gifts. "The little boy," she said, "would be disappointed, when the barrel was opened, if there was not something for *him*." So she sent to a friend accustomed to make such purchases, and obtained for him a warm overcoat, "which he would not outgrow in one winter," and also a new cap.

At another time, just as she was ordering some warm, substantial garments which she wished to give away, she was urged to buy for herself a sealskin sack. When she showed me some of them, I said to her, "This is one way the money goes that might have gone for the sealskin sack." — "Yes," she said, with a beaming smile; "and I'd much rather have it go this way." Mrs. Furber had a room on the first floor of her house, where she

kept the articles sent to her for the barrels. How pleased she always was to show these collections! remarking on the articles, and telling what purposes they would serve. Once, I remember, she seemed as happy as a child about a large box of playthings which had been sent for the little ones in a missionary family. And she did not forget the books, "which the missionary must need so much, and find it so hard to buy." A barrel for a missionary in Oregon, which Mrs. Furber packed with a store of comforts for his family, probably reached its destination after her death.

Mrs. Furber did still more for the work among the freedmen than for the home-missionary work. One reason for this was, that she thought many were less interested in the cause of the colored people, than in home missions or foreign missions. Everywhere and always she was sure to look out for neglected ones. Those whom others passed by were ones to whom she was attracted. A volume might be written on what she did for the colored people. Merely as a suggestion of her sympathy with those engaged in this work, I will quote from a letter lately written by one of the teachers at Atlanta: "The news of Mrs. Furber's death was to me a very great shock. I cannot yet at all realize it. Only the other night, as I was lying awake, and planning some good thing to undertake for these needy ones, I said to myself, 'I'll tell Mrs. Furber, and ask her advice.' And, oh! then the pain to feel that I cannot have her, cannot see her dear face any more. I cannot begin to tell you how I miss her, because she *loved* these people as few love them; and for this very reason she could understand them, and could work for them so wisely. I can't keep back the tears when I think how I loved her and depended

on her. My last visit to her was one that always fills me with thankfulness when I think of it. I never expected to get so close to her heart; and it seemed as if she took me in with such a peculiar warmth of sympathy, that it braced me up for some special trials that were then before me. . . . Mrs. Furber's first word to me was about 'Sula, and her last about Mr. W., who is in the Boston Law School. I hope to second her efforts for them both."

While engaged in manifold plans of benevolence, Mrs. Furber was thoughtful of little things affecting the comfort of others. It was not enough for her to give encouragement and counsel to a young person about to enter on the work of teaching poor whites in Tennessee. She questioned the young lady about her proposed journey, and insisted on furnishing the sum needful to secure her place in a drawing-room car. I met this young lady just before she went South. She spoke of Mrs. Furber; and I said, "How long have you known her?" — "*Six weeks*," was the reply; and the emphasis of it said, "It has been an era in my life."

Much might be told of Mrs. Furber's care for laboring people, her considerateness in all her dealings with them, her interest in their recreation and pleasure; and still more of what she did for the downcast and the tempted, especially for those degraded by intemperance. One such family in particular she has followed with the most persevering kindness. To one of them, against whom many would have shut the door, she said, "You shall have hot coffee whenever you will come here for it." For another of the same family I have known her to have nourishing food cooked in her own house, day after day, because she said his health was suffering from low diet. For the daughter she provided one

place after another, that she might not be drawn into the ways of her parents; and for the mother she did still more than for all the rest. At one time she procured for her a place as a servant in the family of Mr. John B. Gough; and, lest the woman should be overpowered by temptation, she sent a person to see her on her way.

How was it that Mrs. Furber inspired such *confidence*, so that high and low, young and old, intrusted to her what they would to no one else? President Porter answers this question just as if he were thinking of Mrs. Furber, when he writes: "To learn to put ourselves in the condition of others by imagining what would be our expectations, and what our feelings, were we in their place, not only disciplines and guides to that common justice which the laws enjoin, and to that unselfish morality which the Golden Rule prescribes, but it is the secret of that considerate sympathy and refined courtesy which invest with a peculiar attractiveness a few superior natures. It is by this process that we learn to clothe the severe form of allegiance to duty with the graceful robe of unselfish, sympathetic, and divine charity." [1]

Mrs. Furber's manners, with all their dignity and grace, were a truthful expression of her kindness; and every one felt their charm. She was as true as she was courteous. No one could mistake the lines upon her countenance. The truth and sincerity written there were read of all; and to trust her was the most natural thing in the world.

Mrs. Furber's very aspect assured every one of her ability to form wise judgments. A schoolgirl said once, "She looks like

[1] Porter's Elements of Intellectual Science, p. 5.

General Washington." Sometimes it happened that two or more persons having difficulty with each other would each go to Mrs. Furber with the subject of their disagreement. Of such a case I was told the other day; and the narrator added, "Mrs. Furber straightened 'em out all round." Thus, as to the prophetess who dwelt under the palm-tree in Mount Ephraim, many "came up to her for judgment." Some years ago an aged woman in the parish was in the habit of going to Mrs. Furber, "sometimes every day for a week," to tell her grievances. The relative who took care of her used to say, "She always comes back a changed woman after a visit to Mrs. Furber."

I have said that Mrs. Furber's truth and sincerity inspired confidence. No outline of her traits would be fair which did not make this prominent. With what energy did she speak of truthfulness as the foundation of all that is good in character! On this theme no language could be stronger than hers. Her standard of truth and right did not conform to current opinion, for it was the standard of God's word. With this always before her, there was no uncertainty in her moral judgments. Her quick and discerning moral sense infallibly detected false shows. She "hated and abhorred" every form of pretence; and nothing roused her righteous indignation like crooked ways under the guise of religion. This righteous indignation interpreted to us the imprecatory Psalms, and even our Saviour's denunciations against Pharisees and hypocrites.

But still more does her life illustrate to us the precepts of the Gospel. Are there not many of these which we shall always associate with her? No commentary can give us the light on these holy texts which we have in her example. How often do we think of her as we read such as these: —

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."

"Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

Much of the time during the last years of her life, Mrs. Furber suffered great pain; but this did not interrupt her works of benevolence. Her mind was unaffected by bodily infirmity, and it seemed more and more bent upon doing good. She stretched out her hand to the poor: yea, she reached forth her hands to the needy. And the cause which she knew not, she searched out. As she had opportunity, she did good unto all, especially to them who are of the household of faith.

To the last week of her life her ready pen was serving her plans of benevolence. Who can estimate the good it was always doing! Some of the latest lines it traced bear witness to her habit of *considering* the poor.

Mrs. Furber's queenly bearing, her mental powers, her administrative ability, would have adorned a regal station. If she had been Queen of England, she would have devised liberal things for every people within the British dominions. She would have well done her part toward reforms in Ireland and in India, in Great Britain, and South Africa, and Australia. But a broad realm was not needful to give scope to her noble faculties. The grandeur of her life was, that she consecrated it to every lowly work by which she could serve her Lord and Saviour. Nothing which she could

do heartily, as unto the Lord, was too small or too humble to engage her interest. And we know that she is of those blessed ones to whom he will say, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

When her spirit had gone to be with Christ, how lovely was the expression of her countenance! It seemed, indeed, a reflection of the spirit of Christ, and an assurance that she had awaked in his likeness. As we looked upon her "asleep in Jesus," we heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord. . . . Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

CHRIST SEEN AND SERVED IN THE PERSONS OF THE POOR.

A COMMEMORATIVE ADDRESS, BY REV. C. L. WOODWORTH, DELIVERED SUNDAY EVENING, OCT. 1, 1882, IN THE CHAPEL OF THE FIRST CHURCH, NEWTON CENTRE.

CHRISTIAN FRIENDS, — I count it a real privilege that I am permitted to be present this evening to speak of Mrs. Furber in her relation to the work of the American Missionary Association.

But, before doing this, permit me to read from Acts ix. 36–39. "Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.

"And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom, when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber.

"And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them.

"Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber; and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made while she was with them."

The beneficiaries of her bounty standing round about; the almsdeeds which she had wrought, brought to mind; the coats and garments, so vividly characterizing her work and life, spread out before him, — all *these* were a picture which brought to the mind of Peter, as with a flash, the character of the woman who lay cold and still in the chamber above.

And do they not as strikingly bring before us the character and the work of her who so recently has passed from our sight? I have the impression, if a committee were appointed from this meeting to visit the parsonage, they would find the coats and the garments which *her* hands had prepared for the missionary at the front and the poor and needy in the cabins of the South. If they are not there to-night, I am sure they *have* been there in time past, and *would* have been there again, had not death stilled the busy fingers.

My first acquaintance with Mrs. Furber began in the early summer of 1866. It was a bright Sunday afternoon, I think, in June. I was in the West Parish in the morning, and rode up here in the afternoon. I did not then know Mrs. Furber, and did not meet her until the close of the service. Sitting before me, a little to my right, was a lady, who, as I sketched the people with whose wants three years in the army had made me familiar, showed such eager interest, — her eyes glowing with light, or melting in tears; her whole person kindling with the intensest feeling, — that I ceased to think of others and almost to see them; and I talked to her alone. It was Mrs. Furber, as I learned when I came down from the pulpit, and from that hour we have been *en rapport*, as I may say, in regard to this work. And whenever I have thought of her since, and as I think of her now, she rises before me as she appeared that sunny day in June.

I came to know her as well as I could know any one whom I met, say, on an average once a year, and with whom I was in correspondence, more or less frequent as the work demanded, during all these years. Could I have foreseen what has happened, and what a power for counsel and for work she was to be, it would have been a simply natural thing to preserve her letters, and jot down her suggestions, and keep some record of her gifts and efforts, in our behalf. It is impossible now to do this in detail; but we can truthfully say that she gave hand and head and heart to this service, without flagging and without flinching, to the end of her life: indeed, I suspect it will be found that she multiplied her labors as the days grew shorter and fewer in which she could work at all.

It is only a little time ago — within three weeks, I should say — that I received from her a note asking why the American Missionary Association declined to assume the work which Mrs. Comstock was anxious to turn over to its care and control. This was the first intimation I had had that she had invested money among the Exodites in Kansas, and only illustrates how wide was her outlook and her charity. More recently, written within ten days of her death, a note came to my care for the wife of President Ware of Atlanta University. I happened to see Mrs. Ware open the note, and take out a check of fifty dollars for student aid at Atlanta.

There is a young man in Boston who graduated at Atlanta one year ago last June. He came to Boston to study law in connection with the Boston University. Mrs. Furber heard of him through a gentleman whom I see before me this evening. She learned that he was wholly dependent on what he might be able

to earn, or what friends might aid in his support. Through this gentleman she instituted inquiries at once, about his clothing, — whether his shoes were thick and heavy enough for the rain and snow of our falls and winters; whether his under-clothing was strong and warm enough for a climate like ours; whether he had an overcoat sufficient to protect him on our icy streets and from our easterly winds: and only after the bundle had been sent by the hands of her trusty agent did she cease to be anxious about this young man. To the contents of that bundle I have no doubt he owes his health, perhaps his life.

These are only instances, not alone of the last few weeks of her life, but of the years she has had the opportunity of caring for these poor people. It would be impossible to spread out in detail all that she did, and all that she planned and purposed, in this behalf. You have in what I have said a specimen of her work: spread it over the years, multiply it by the weeks of the years, and you have an idea of the work which busied her brain and her hands, and absorbed so much of her very life, while she was battling all the time with torturing bodily pain.

A few years since a young colored minister — Rev. Joseph Smith, now of Chattanooga, Tenn. — came to New England for a brief visit. He was a graduate of Atlanta, and had been helped through his course of study by Mrs. Furber. He was my guest for a few days, and was exceedingly anxious to see his benefactress. One afternoon we rode out to the parsonage, and, had he been her own son, she could hardly have received him more cordially and joyfully. And she has watched him on his field of labor ever since; and during the last winter, when God was owning his ministry in the conversion of scores, her joy was full. His

friends at Chattanooga can tell you how her bounty came, and how her words of cheer made the hard winter's work so easy and light. She rests from her labors; but her works do follow her.

She had the rare faculty, perhaps I should say double faculty, of comprehending a great cause, and at the same time of making individual cases all her own. I have seen persons, and so have you, who could take broad and comprehensive views of things, who could generalize in a large way, and bring out principles, but who, when they came to matters of detail in the application of principles, were as weak and unwise as infancy. But she had the power of generalization: her eye swept the whole field, and she saw in a moment its possibilities, and what combinations could be made to bring out the grandest results. I have heard her talk of the work in the South *as a work for the African race*, until her tongue thrilled with eloquence, her face shone with a strange light, and her whole person seemed to expand to the measure of her theme. To her it seemed so strange that people did not see what to her was so plain; that the churches were so slow to accept their opportunity; that the very *conjuncture* of the death of slavery and the opening of the African Continent by exploration and commerce, were a demonstration that they were part and parcel of the same plan and pattern, and meant the salvation of the African race. Why could not the churches see it? Had blindness happened to the people of God? How hot and fast her words fell, as she pictured the possibilities which lay in the Southern work, and as she expressed her amazement at the failure of good people to discern the signs of the times!

And yet she would descend from such a height of enthusiasm to

take up the simplest case of want, and in a moment would be so absorbed in it, that a stranger might have felt that she thought of nothing else. This she was continually doing. She had her special cases here, — widows, orphans, the poor: how many of them she planned for and provided for within this parish, as if they only engaged her thought! Yet she had her special cases in the home-missionary family on the frontier, among the Exodites in Kansas, at Hampton, at Atlanta, at Berea, at Tougaloo, — all along the line where want was calling for relief. So broad were her faculties, so facile was her power of detail and of application, that she could comprehend at once the millions upon the African Continent, and yet devote herself to a single human soul, as if *it* alone were the human race. There may be others like her, but not many. We find, more frequently, persons who are able to take wide surveys, but have little power of organization and of detail; or persons who can only see and work for some single thing, but have no power to broaden out, and grasp a great system. In Mrs. Furber the two faculties were united. This pre-eminently distinguished her, making her so broad, and at the same time so intensely practical and effective.

And this, it seems to me, gives us the key to her religious character and expression. I must think that her life was a striking illustration of the religion of the New Testament. There was nothing gushing, there was little of sentimentalism, about it. Her piety was not a dress to be put on, but a life to quicken all the being. It possessed all her faculties. From the crown of her head to the sole of her foot, she was moved, energized, and mastered by it. It did not set her tongue running on her own frames; it did not set her to watching or nursing her own emo-

tions, or seeking comfort by looking into the skies: but it sent her forth on ministries of love to the needy. I could hardly conceive of her shutting herself up to the luxury of singing winnowed hymns, or going about to tell her own experiences, or catering to her own enjoyment through excited feelings or dreamy ease. Her intelligence, her heart, her will, her body, *all*, were set to the task of planning and toiling to make the world better. Like her Master, she went about doing good. She lost her life that she might find it *again* in the souls quickened by her own divine impulses.

No church was large enough to hold her. There are not a few connected with our churches, as you know, who are only known within the little church circle. Their lives have no outward flow: round and round the little circle they revolve. Beyond *that* nobody knows them, nobody feels their influence, or is the better for their living. But there are others who belong to all the churches: their lives overflow the local boundary, and run out over the entire community. They are a strength to every good cause; they stand with all good people, and belong to the company who love the Lord. Mrs. Furber was one of these. Who thinks of her as a Congregationalist, as merely a member of the First Church of Newton? She was a broad, grand Christian woman whom every church claimed, and whom every good and right cause leaned upon for support. In the town where I live we have just buried our first citizen, a member of the Baptist Church; and yet all the churches claimed him, and all good people are weaker for his loss. Very unlike Mrs. Furber in many respects, and yet like her in this, that his life overflowed the church boundary, and sent its influence far and wide. What a

loss such lives are to the great and holy causes which call for champions, and to those who are battling to bring this world to Christ!

I have the impression that THE *Christ* whom Mrs. Furber specially saw and sympathized with was the Christ who now walks the earth in the persons of his poor. I think she had read under the light of an awful meaning that passage in the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew, "I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. . . .

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

To *her* these four millions coming out of the house of their bondage, *in need of every thing*, were Christ himself, hungry, thirsty, naked, homeless, — a stranger. In them she saw her Lord; in them she heard *his* cry of distress; in them, as unto *him*, she gave her sympathies, her time, her bounty. She walked under the light of that vision which so glorified her life. Each one of that suffering race whom she took into her family, to whom she sent clothing, or aided in his course of education, represented *him*. It was a holy service, which grew upon her to the end. In them she dedicated herself and her ministries to Christ, saying, —

"But Thou hast brethren here below,
The partners of thy grace;
And wilt confess their humble names
Before thy Father's face.

In them *Thou* mayst be clothed and fed,
And visited and cheered,
And in their accents of distress
My Saviour's voice is heard."

I know how she longed to see the world subdued to Christ. Like President Edwards, she read the newspapers minutely; not so much that she might keep trace of the current of affairs as that she might discover something which bore on the progress of Christ's kingdom. She was eager to find in public events signs of the Lord's coming in power and glory. All the forces of our modern civilization — the steamships, railroads, telegraphs, telephone, and the thousand inventions which invest man with new power — she looked upon as God's ministers to hasten and bring in the fulness of his kingdom. She saw how they were harnessed to the King's chariot; how he was using them to spread the knowledge of Christ; how they were dragging the nations into neighborhood, binding them into a family of brothers, that *he* might finally fuse them into a family of saints. The opening of Africa to the world's commerce and civilization, just at the time when the fetters were knocked from Africa's children in this republic, struck her as a startling indication from Heaven, that on *that line* the African Continent was to be won to Christ. I know that her soul exulted in the thought and in the prospect, and that it was largely *this* which made her service so ready and so abounding to these children of the African race.

You know her exceeding modesty, how she shrank from any thing like public notoriety. She was the most womanly of women, and yet she was a born leader. She had no self-assertion. She did not step to the front, and demand place and power; but you yielded it as a matter of course. You saw the fitness of things, and at once vacated the place, and invited her to the head. She could not help it; neither could you.

She was made on a large pattern, — body, mind, heart, will.

We all felt her power, and looked to her to lead the way. She had a grasp of mind strong enough to have made her secretary of state: indeed, I do not hesitate to say that she comprehended State problems, and the principles on which States grow and prosper, better than most who have filled that office. Her mind had a Websterian strength and grace.

Another thing which struck me was what seemed a thorough mental honesty; and by this I mean that she took the widest survey of the field, of which she was capable, and formed her judgments after full collation of the facts. Like the ideal scientist, seeking light from every quarter, and open to its reception, come from where it might, she was ready to follow the truth wherever it might lead. She submitted her judgment to her intelligence, and was not afraid to obey her convictions. She loved the slave when it was not popular to do so. She was on the side of the weak when only a few stood with her. She counted the cost, and took her stand for righteousness and truth. I do not think the great mass of the colored people as you would find them in the South would be more agreeable to her than they would be to you; only she would probably have seen in them more clearly the humanity now represented on the throne, and for *that* would have gone down among them with perfect serenity and cheerfulness, bidding every offended sense and feeling *be still.* She had schooled herself to do right. She had said to her soul, "I will do for the poor as I would do for my Lord."

But, *friends,* I must not pursue this theme, tempting as it is. Such a life as hers has its lesson for us all. As we gather around this fresh-made grave, we would not alter, if we could, the grand trend of her life. Already she has heard from her Lord, "Come,

ye blessed of my Father." She knows now that what she did for the poor she did unto him.

And yet, while we rejoice in the victory she has won and the crown and the glory to which she has attained, we know not how to spare her. The burdens will be heavier upon those who remain. Her death has been heard in distant places in this and in other lands. It has carried sadness and tears into all the homes of this parish and people, into the home-missionary family out on the farthest verge of civilization, into the lowly dwellings of the Exodites on the plains of Kansas, and into the schools and cabins of a despised race in the South.

She was faithful unto death. Among the latest objects which busied her thought was the formation of a young ladies' circle to educate an Indian girl at Hampton. She died before the circle was formed; but you will see that her thought does not die with her, and that the dusky maiden does not lack the means of intellectual and spiritual enlightenment because Mrs. Furber is not here to provide them.

You will pardon me if I close these remarks by telling you what I have never told any one before. Some of you may remember, that, several years ago, I published in "The Congregationalist" "An Open Letter to the Christian Women of America." That letter owed its origin to Mrs. Furber. In a conversation I had with her a few weeks before, she had expressed the greatest anxiety lest the women in our churches should turn away from these poor and needy ones at our own door. She suggested a letter in "The Congregationalist," detailing the facts, and calling upon Christian women to meet the immense need, especially of their own *sex*, among this poor people. I urged her to write the

letter. I said to her, "You are full of the subject, and you can best put your own thought before the public. It should be written *by* a woman *to* women: who can do it so well as you? You are known: your name will carry weight, and women will listen." But she said, "No: I am not equal to it. In my state of health it would cost me more than I can endure." And then she turned to me, saying, "You are the one to write it. You have the facts, and you can speak officially." What could I do? I am not sure that I promised her; but I do know that I went from her presence resolved that, with God's help, I would write the letter.

This, friends, is the account of "An Open Letter to the Christian Women of America." If it has had any influence in arousing attention to the condition and wants of the colored women in this land, if it has done any thing to deepen conviction in the minds of the good women of this country, and to quicken conscience towards the duty they owe these women of a long-enslaved race, if it has served any purpose of good in their behalf, I here give to Mrs. Furber the credit of being its inspiring cause.

FROM PROFESSOR E. A. PARK, D.D.,

SEPT. 26, 1882.

I was very much surprised and saddened by the news of the deep affliction which has come upon you. I had not heard any intimation of Mrs. Furber's illness, and had never associated the idea of death with the idea of her. She was formed for *life*. And although we all must die, yet it seems difficult to realize the idea that *some* persons will ever cease to move about among us. Of course she is living yet, — living a higher life than ever. But she was peculiarly fitted for living in the body. Her presence was so dignified and commanding, her address was so refined and winning, that it did seem desirable for her to remain on earth, and exert her usual influence upon the community. It did not seem expedient that she should go away. . . .

It is pleasant to remember that she continued to be a real power in the community after she had become unable to go about doing good; and so we have reason to believe that she will yet continue to affect the minds of men, although she is taken up to a higher sphere. The reminiscences of her sound sense, accurate judgment, wise counsels, judicious piety, earnest and active benevolence, will be in the future an incentive to faithful work. The

men as well as the women of your parish will be guided by the remembrance of her exemplary life. She was qualified to influence the judgment of men as well as to gain the affections of women.

. . . . . .

I was anticipating much pleasure in seeing your excellent wife at her home next month. I had been planning to go there about the middle of October. It would have been a memorable visit to me, if I had seen her so soon before she was translated.

PART OF A LETTER OF THE HON. RUFUS CHOATE,

ON THE RETURN OF HIS DAUGHTERS TO THE SCHOOL IN HANOVER AFTER A VACATION, WRITTEN ABOUT THE YEAR 1845.

My dear Mrs. Peabody,—The girls seem very happy again, and I cannot help thinking will retain from their relation to you much more than the memory of so much happiness. It will be their error if they do not. Certainly I shall give them little cause to complain of their father, if I perform all the paternal duties as well as I have this, of giving their minds and hearts a teacher and guide.

I am most truly your obliged servant,

Rufus Choate.

FROM REV. WILLIAM S. HUBBELL.

During my four years in West Roxbury, one of my choicest privileges was the exchange of pulpits which took me to Newton Centre. Those were the times when I met your beloved wife, and delighted in her rare and piquant hospitality. More than once have I planned an "exchange" for the sake of meeting Mrs. Furber. She seemed to be endowed with a youthful spirit which was perennial. Whenever I saw her, she was as sprightly and vivacious as a girl, while presiding with rare dignity and grace in her own home. She often reminded me, in this respect, of the wife of Dr. Storrs of Braintree, who, even to the last years of her old age, never lost her youthful spirit, nor failed to sympathize with the sanguine view of life. So of Mrs. Furber; it was true that her words were never discouraging, while her conversation was also brightened by the constant interplay of the keenest and kindliest wit. How many of her entertaining recitals I have treasured up and repeated for the comfort and amusement of my own wife, then just entering on the cares of a minister's household! "Well, what did Mrs. Furber say *this time?*" was always the inquiry that met me on my return from a stay at your house. Enjoying as I did these confidential talks at your table, and receiving, both with delight and profit, her descriptions of what was wise in clerical

affairs, it used to impress me, besides this, that she would be a formidable foe to encounter on the opposite side of any discussion or action. She must have been the ruling spirit in any circle where she opened her lips.

FROM REV. A. H. CLAPP, D.D.,

SEPT. 26, 1882.

It is difficult to associate the thought of death with the vigorous bearing and cheerful spirit of Mrs. Furber. Of all people she was one of the most thoroughly alive, — interested in every thing that was going on, in your parish, in the town, the State, the country, and all over the world, and ever ready to take a hand in whatever promised good to the great cause that was dearer to her than life itself. What a life hers has been! — usefulness so great, so varied, so charged with the element of self-propagation, and continued through so many years! What multitudes to rise up and call her blessed! How few lives, how *very* few lives, have equalled hers in fruitfulness to the glory of God! How truly Dr. Wellman has spoken of her most helpful and instructive talks with your ministerial brethren who spent the sabbath in your home! I shall never forget nor cease to be grateful for them. She did truly and warmly love the brethren.

FROM A LETTER WRITTEN BY MRS. FURBER

TO MRS. PRESIDENT E. A. WARE.

FEB. 20, 1880.

I AM busy as a bee, no, as a whole swarm, in getting garments made and repaired for the fleeing refugees. I am pressing all I can into the service, and, as I lie down weary at night, enjoy the luxury of thinking how many poor shivering creatures will be made more comfortable for what, after all, is not much. I have not yet reached the Scripture rule of "He that hath two coats," etc. I have kept a change of garments, but have found, oh, how many superfluous articles which it costs no sacrifice to part with!

LETTER OF MRS. FURBER TO A YOUNG LADY.

DEC. 6, 1879.

MY DEAR ——, — Do not feel troubled by any thing you have said to me. I never have so many cares or troubles of my own that I cannot listen to others' anxieties, and sympathize with them in their trials. Sometimes we feel better for speaking to a friend; and I hope you regard us as friends to you, as we certainly are, and would gladly do for you and for yours any thing we can.

You have trials and responsibilities which are hard for one so young to bear; but God knows *just our needs*, and, dark as the world sometimes looks, he has said, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee." You must try to do this, and bear life's burdens with a quiet and patient spirit, trusting that light will be given you if you prayerfully seek, and strength equal to your day be bestowed. You are now your dear mother's strong arm to lean upon, and while you feel that you are lifting any of her heavy burdens, doing day by day the duties which daily come, you cannot be very unhappy. I am sure you will be blessed in proportion to the sacrifices you make, and made happy in doing what God appoints for you. I am anxious you should . . . for it may be the means of opening to you a more paying occupation and lighter labor.

"If on our daily course our mind
Be set to hallow all we find,
New treasures still of countless price
God will provide for sacrifice.

Oh, could we learn that sacrifice,
What lights would all around us rise!
How would our hearts with wisdom talk
Along life's dullest, dreariest walk!

The trivial round, the common task,
Would furnish all we ought to ask, —
Room to deny ourselves, a road
To bring us daily nearer God.

Seek we no more: content with these,
Let present rapture, comfort, ease,
As Heaven shall bid them, come and go;
The secret this of rest below.

Only, O Lord, in thy dear love,
Fit us for perfect rest above;
And help us, this and every day,
To live more nearly as we pray."

Remember always, if we can in any way assist you, we shall be glad to do so at any time.

Your friend, very truly,

MRS. FURBER.

Advance

—We have received two pamphlets that deserve more than a passing notice. The first is "In Memoriam: Rev. Henry Cowles, D. D.," containing a short biographical sketch of his life by his brother, Rev. J. P. Cowles; and the tender and appreciative addresses of President Fairchild and Rev. Wm. Kincaid at the memorial services. We quote a characteristic incident related by President Fairchild:

He was riding with horse and buggy one day in Huron county, revolving the question of his future work, when it seemed to be borne in upon him as from the Lord, that he should write commentaries for the common people. He seemed to himself to have replied: "Lord, I cannot undertake this work without the constant supervision, help and light of the Spirit upon thy Word;" and the answer was immediate and decided: "Let this be the understanding." And he added: "Through all the following years, while engaged in this work, I trustfully asked him each morning for light, and it always came, making my heart light and settled with the feeling that I had had an interview with the Almighty, and had received my commission;" and he seemed to himself to have entered into covenant with the Lord to pursue the work as his strength continued, and the way was open.

The other pamphlet is in memory of Mrs. Maria Brigham Furber, and contains the funeral sermon by Rev. J. W. Wellman, D. D., together with the remarks of Prof. O. S. Stearns, reminiscences by Miss M. H. Cornelius, the commemorative address by Rev. C. L. Woodworth; and letters from Prof. E. A. Park, Hon. Rufus Choate, Sec. Clapp, Rev. W. S. Hubbell and others. Mrs. Furber was a woman of rare gifts and graces, both of person and spirit. As a teacher she won the unbounded love and confidence of her pupils, and impressed herself upon them as it is given to few women to do. When she exchanged the school-room for the parsonage, she was still a guiding spirit wherever she moved, sending out streams of blessing in every direction. The words of praise spoken in this little memorial are inadequate to express all she was in herself, and all she was to those with whom she came in contact.